

Zero Waste SG

Suggested Project Type: Strategy Planning / Publicity & Marketing

1. Company Background

Founded in 2008, Zero Waste SG has grown from a small website providing recycling and waste minimisation tips to become a recognised charity in Singapore (see **Exhibit 1** for the milestones of Zero Waste SG).

Since 2015, Zero Waste SG has led the drive towards zero waste in Singapore through education and advocacy. Through Zero Waste SG's services and campaigns, Zero Waste SG's impact has reached over 55,000 people and engaged more than 220 companies.

2. Context

In 2020, Zero Waste SG was experiencing a period of disruption caused by COVID-19 and challenges at some fronts, especially in securing stable sources of funding. New methods need to be implemented to sustain its business and stay relevant amongst shifting demographics. Moving forward, Zero Waste SG needs to identify ways to attain a sustainable business model and adapt to the changing local situation appropriately.

2.1 Current Sources of Funding

Zero Waste SG is a non-profit NGO that relies on funds through its campaign partnerships and charging for its services to organisations and schools. With its newly attained Charity status in 2019, Zero Waste SG has also diversified its funding sources to include public donations as well.

2.1.1 Campaigns

Through its nationwide campaigns, Zero Waste SG attains monetary support through governmental and organisational partnerships that is used to sustain its operations.

In 2017, Zero Waste SG started its largest ongoing movement, BYO (Bring Your Own) Singapore movement. Between September to December 2017, with the partnerships of many brands, more than 2.5 million pieces of disposables were averted from incineration. As of September 2020, BYO Singapore has 1,120 supporting outlets from 137 brands. This ongoing hallmark movement has the support of NEA and other organisational partners, who provide the necessary funding that helps Zero Waste SG sustain its operations for a few months at a time.

2.1.2 Services

Zero Waste SG provides a variety of paid services to organisations and schools. These include providing talks and workshops, organising activities such as beach clean-ups, and providing consultation services and office waste audits. Engagement packages currently provided includes ZWSG Engagement packages, ZWSG Online engagement packages and ZWSG School packages (see **Exhibit 2** for details).

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In 2020, Zero Waste SG started piloting the 'Zero Waste School' programme. This is a programme package where schools can be endorsed as a Zero Waste School after fulfilling the necessary checklist. Co-funding is also an option the schools can take up, and corporate partners can also co-sponsor the Zero Waste School Programme.

2.1.3 Charity

As a newly established Charity, Zero Waste SG is able to fund-raise and receive public donations as a viable income source alternative to relying on government and corporate funding. By reaching out to the public directly such as through giving.sg, Zero Waste SG is hopeful that it could potentially sustain its operations through the generosity of the public that have aligned themselves with the cause.

2.1.4 Position Papers

Additionally, Zero Waste SG writes position papers to advocate for policy and landscape changes. Through the position papers, Zero Waste SG provides detailed analysis of and recommendations for the waste situation faced in Singapore, urging the government and businesses to act (see **Exhibit 3** for more information). Zero Waste SG wants to know if this could be a direction to grow in to increase its credibility and to also generate revenue.

2.2 Challenges faced by Zero Waste SG

Despite the multitude of creative methods to create avenues of funding for its operations, Zero Waste SG still faces the big challenge of organisational sustainability.

2.2.1 Disruptive effects of COVID-19

With COVID-19 restrictions on all organisations, Zero Waste SG is unable to carry out most of its services and programmes, due to the physical nature of them. Examples include the physical talks and workshops that are usually held at the organisations, and the office waste audits that require Zero Waste SG's consultants to be physically present to observe the client's waste management on-site.

Like many organisations, Zero Waste SG has swiftly adapted to this disruption by shifting online. However, this is still proven to be insufficient, as demand for its services has taken a plunge since then. This poses a large threat to Zero Waste SG's operational stability, as services and campaigns make up a big proportion of Zero Waste SG's income used to sustain operations.

2.2.2 Public donations as an income source

Despite a substantial public reach in the social media space (see **Exhibit 4** for Zero Waste SG's public reach), Zero Waste SG faces challenges in maximising its impact and converting its extensive public reach into actual public support. Zero Waste SG observed that public donations are trickling in at a slow and unsustainable pace. Zero Waste SG has tried virtual fundraisers with COVID-19 putting a halt to any busking activities, but they were proven to be ineffective.

This can be seen in the poor outcome of Zero Waste SG's ongoing online fundraiser on giving.sg. To date, the fundraisers have only reached 1-2% of their goals, with the number of donors stagnating in the single digits (see **Exhibit 5**).

Zero Waste SG has suggested a variety of reasons for the lack of donation support. One such reason highlighted is the abstract nature of the Zero Waste concept being less appealing to the general masses. In contrast to more tangible causes such as calling for funds for reforestation or to save endangered animals,

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the effects of the Zero Waste movement are not as immediately seen or felt. There could be a weaker impression on the public when the direct impact of their donation seems less tangible. Thus, this is one of the plausible explanations for why public outreach for donations has been ineffective so far.

2.2.3 The growing need to diversify

With the current erratic demand for its services and weak donation stream, there is a pressing need for Zero Waste SG to find creative and stable alternative sources of income. In addition, Zero Waste SG has the end goal of decreasing reliance on funding from government and/or corporate organisations. Not just to ensure organisational neutrality in the long run, Zero Waste SG hopes to decrease the volatility of relying on these organisations' support. By diversifying its income sources, Zero Waste SG wants to stabilise its funding and ensure long-term organisational sustainability. Thus, Zero Waste SG wants to discover what more can be done on top of its current activities.

3. Problem Statement

Although its current funding strategies are sufficient to sustain operations pre-COVID, the recent disruption caused by COVID-19 highlighted the need to diversify Zero Waste SG's sources of funding. With public donations proving to be an unreliable source of consistent funding, Zero Waste SG is looking for strategies to improve donation turnout as a newly established charity.

Given the challenges highlighted, how could Zero Waste SG achieve a sustainable business model and continue to grow its impact in Singapore in the next 2 years?

Do give detailed solution(s) for each challenge highlighted with sustainability considerations. Solutions should be backed up by market research and proper evidence. Impact of the recommendations should be measurable socially, economically, and environmentally.

4. Additional Resources

4.1 United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UNSDGs)

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development was launched in 2015 to end poverty and set the world on a path of peace, prosperity, and opportunity for all on a healthy planet. The 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) demand the transformative pathways needed to create a more liveable world. The continued pursuit of these universal Goals will keep Governments around the world focused on growth, but also on inclusion, equity and sustainability.

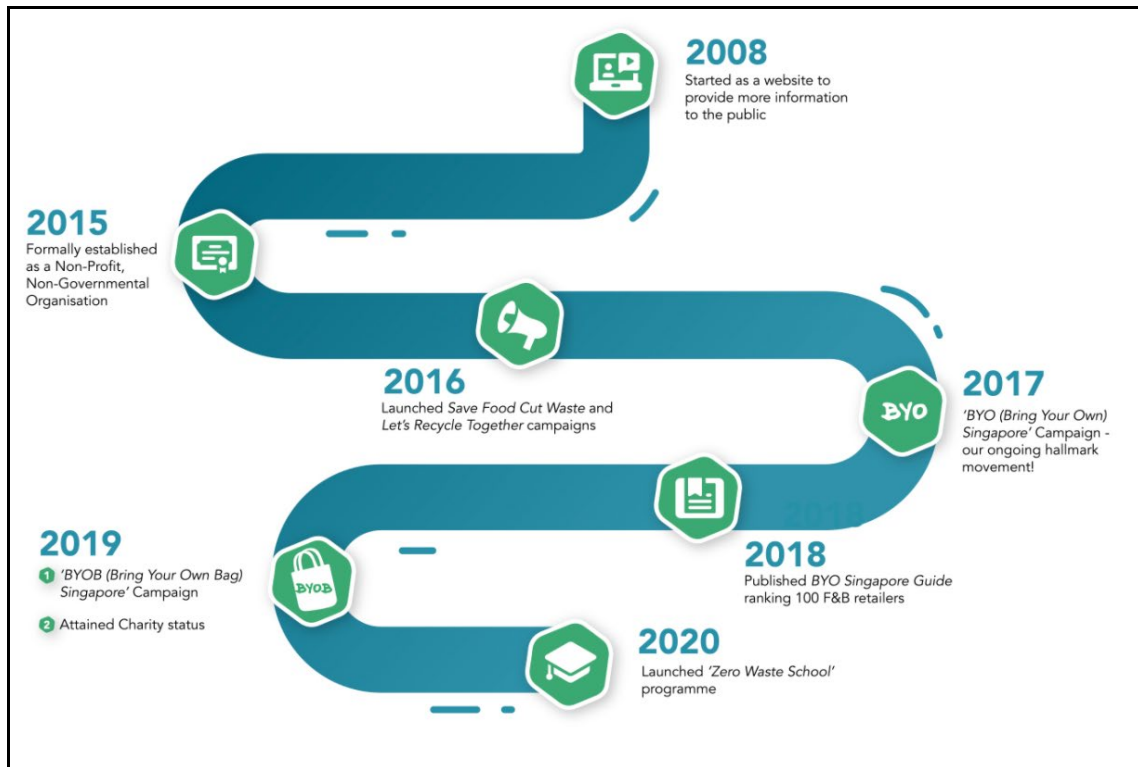
Zero Waste SG's core vision and mission strongly aligns with SDG Goal 12: Responsible Consumption and Production. This Goal is focused on ensuring sustainable consumption and production patterns (see **Exhibit 6** for information of SDG 12). Zero Waste SG is determined to lead the drive towards zero waste in Singapore, working towards fulfilling its vision of "a nation where individuals, communities, businesses and organisations value and conserve resources, and embrace zero waste and the circular economy". Zero Waste SG hopes to drive systemic change starting from individual action, through influencing the general public, corporates, schools, and government, with its key focus being on four categories: food waste, plastic disposables, household recycling and organisational waste.

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5. Appendix

EXHIBIT 1: MILESTONES



Source: <http://www.zerowastesg.com/>

EXHIBIT 2: ENGAGEMENT PACKAGES

ZWSG Services:

<http://www.zerowastesg.com/service/>

ZWSG Engagement Packages 2020:

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/gyyqoyzsb73fjdm/ZWSG%20Engagement%20packages%202020.pdf?dl=0>

ZWSG Online Engagement Packages 2020:

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/blrr1veaoynm73s/ZWSG%20Online%20engagement%20packages%202020%20R2.pdf?dl=0>

ZWSG School Packages 2020:

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/3dp58mpmgqe67dg/ZWSG%20School%20Packages%202020.pdf?dl=0>

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EXHIBIT 3: POSITION PAPERS

POSITION PAPER ON THE REDUCTION OF SINGLE-USE PLASTIC DISPOSABLES IN SINGAPORE:

<http://www.zerowastesg.com/plasticdisposables/>

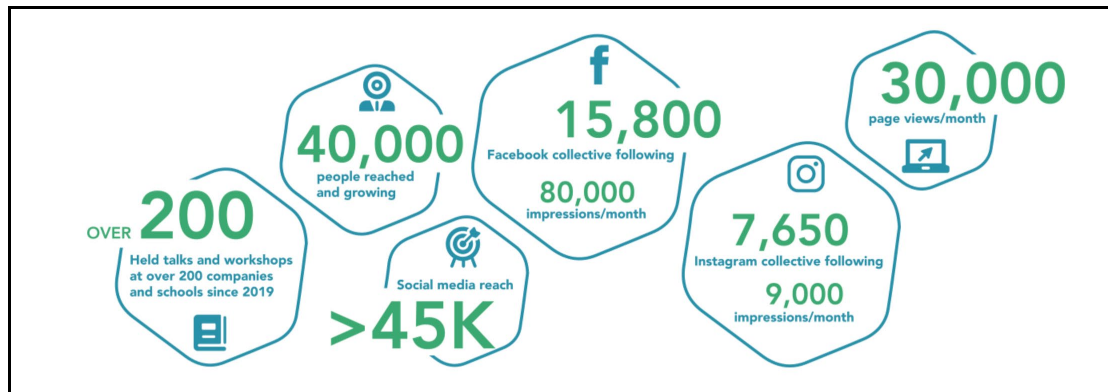
RECOMMENDATION PAPER ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF A PLASTIC BAG CHARGE IN SINGAPORE:

<http://www.zerowastesg.com/2016/09/12/recommendation-paper-on-the-implementation-of-a-plastic-bag-charge-in-singapore/>

BYO SINGAPORE GUIDE 2018: RATING FOR F&B RETAILERS' EFFORTS TO REDUCE PLASTIC DISPOSABLES:

<http://www.zerowastesg.com/byorating/>

EXHIBIT 4: PUBLIC OUTREACH



Source: <http://www.zerowastesg.com/>

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EXHIBIT 5: FUNDRAISING

ZWSG's profile on Giving.sg: <https://www.giving.sg/zerowastesg>

FUNDRAISE NOW

End Date ▼

3 RESULTS FOUND




\$10
raised from 1 donor


1% of \$5,000 30 more days

Supporting Zero Waste SG for...

by Delegate Pte Ltd for ZERO WASTE SG LIMITED

On top of donating \$1 for every 2 people who registers for...

 Starts on 23/10/2020
Ends on 29/11/2020




\$910
raised from 9 donors


2% of \$50,000 62 more days

BYO Singapore Movement

by ZERO WASTE SG LIMITED

The Bring Your Own(BYO) Singapore movement started in 2017...

 Starts on 01/04/2020
Ends on 31/12/2020




\$480
raised from 8 donors

1% of \$40,000 62 more days

Zero Waste School

by ZERO WASTE SG LIMITED

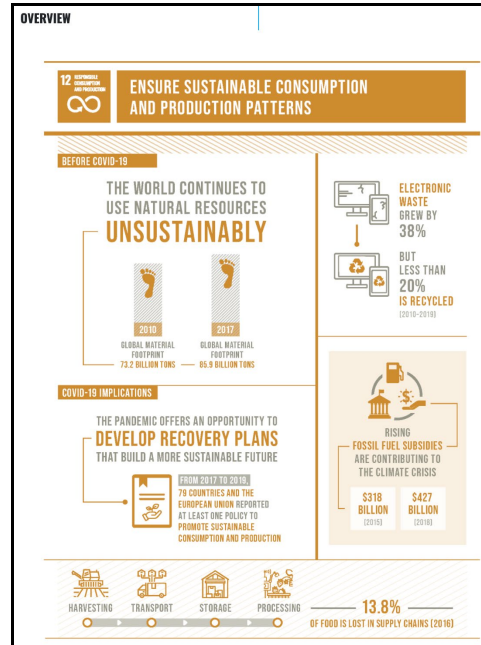
Zero Waste School aims to empower stakeholders within...

 Starts on 01/04/2020
Ends on 31/12/2020

Source: <https://www.giving.sg/manage-campaigns?orgId=33146438>

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EXHIBIT 6: SDG 12



Source: <https://sdgs.un.org/goals/goal12>

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TARGETS AND INDICATORS	
Target 12.1	Implement the 10-year framework of programmes on sustainable consumption and production, all countries taking action, with developed countries taking the lead, taking into account the development and capabilities of developing countries
Indicator	-
Target 12.2	By 2030, achieve the sustainable management and efficient use of natural resources <i>SDG4-6gt</i>
Indicator	-
Target 12.3	By 2030, halve per capita global food waste at the retail and consumer levels and reduce food losses along production and supply chains, including post-harvest losses
Indicator	-
Target 12.4	By 2020, achieve the environmentally sound management of chemicals and all wastes throughout their life cycle, in accordance with agreed international frameworks, and significantly reduce their release to air, water and soil in order to minimize their adverse impacts on human health and the environment
Indicator	-
Target 12.5	By 2030, substantially reduce waste generation through prevention, reduction, recycling and reuse
Indicator	-
Target 12.6	Encourage companies, especially large and transnational companies, to adopt sustainable practices and to integrate sustainability information into their reporting cycle <i>SDG4-6gt</i>
Indicator	-
Target 12.7	Promote public procurement practices that are sustainable, in accordance with national policies and priorities
Indicator	-
Target 12.8	By 2030, ensure that people everywhere have the relevant information and awareness for sustainable development and lifestyles in harmony with nature <i>SDG4-6gt</i>
Indicator	-
Target 12.a	Support developing countries to strengthen their scientific and technological capacity to move towards more sustainable patterns of consumption and production <i>SDG4-6gt</i>
Indicator	-
Target 12.b	Develop and implement tools to monitor sustainable development impacts for sustainable tourism that creates jobs and promotes local culture and products <i>SDG4-6gt</i>
Indicator	-
Target 12.c	Rationalize inefficient fossil-fuel subsidies that encourage wasteful consumption by removing market distortions, in accordance with national circumstances, including by restructuring taxation and phasing out those harmful subsidies, where they exist, to reflect their environmental impacts, taking fully into account the specific needs and conditions of developing countries and minimizing the possible adverse impacts on their development in a manner that protects the poor and the affected communities
Indicator	-

Source: <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/report/2020/>

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